



Resource Family Connection

News, Events, and Information Benefiting
the Children of Waukesha County
March and April, 2017



The Importance of Sibling Relationships

By: Coalition for Children, Youth and Families

The focus in foster care is often on a child's relationship with his or her parent(s) and the efforts to restore that connection. Children in care live outside their parental home for a period of time, and in the case of some, for the remainder of their childhoods. We know these separations create anxiety, grief, and loss for both parent and child. Often, what further impacts the trauma of living apart is the separation from sibling(s).

A child's relationship with his or siblings are some of the longest lasting relationships they will have, usually outliving parent-child bonds and even sometimes spousal relationships. Siblings are the first peer group that children have. Kids usually spend more time with their brothers and sisters than with any other group of kids. Cheering for each other at school events, celebrating holidays together, and even the mundane moments, like riding the school bus together, are everyday activities brothers and sisters share and bond over. The strong bonds between siblings may become even more vital when children are faced with the stress of their parents not being able to meet their needs. Children lean on their siblings during difficult times, and their bond may become even stronger than the ties they have with their parents.

Through the eyes of a child, a brother or sister may be someone different than those a caseworker or an attorney would identify. Children do not necessarily use biology to define who they feel their siblings are. Moreover, children in foster care may live with and form strong ties to children with whom they have not had a previous relationship. Whether connected by biology or not, those ties can be a source of strength and comfort for a child in out-of-home care, making it necessary for us to rethink who a child may regard as a sibling.

Asking the child who they consider a sibling is a good way to determine who they feel is a meaningful source of support. For example, this could mean:

- ⊗ Full or half-siblings, including any children who were previously removed from the home
- ⊗ Step-siblings
- ⊗ Adopted children in the same household
- ⊗ Other close relatives or nonrelatives living in the same house
- ⊗ Foster children in the same family
- ⊗ Other teens in group homes with whom the youth has a close relationship
- ⊗ Children of the partner or former partner of the child's parent

These important relationships are even more vital to children when they enter care. Caseworkers and resource families can significantly improve the out-of-home experience for kids when

they're aware of these sibling or sibling-like relationships and do their best to maintain these connections.

- ⊗ When children are removed from their home and from their siblings, they suffer additional grief and loss through separation. "I spent 12 years in the foster care system, moving from place to place. Most painful of all, I was separated from my younger brother. I later learned he was living only a couple of exits down the highway, just a few minutes away, but we had no contact." - Anthony, from A Tale of Two Brothers, FosterClub.com



- ⊗ Kids in care may feel an extra layer of safety when they are placed with their siblings. That comforting presence of a brother or sister provides an emotional buffer from the fear that many children experience when moving into an unfamiliar home.

- ⊗ Kids in foster care usually wind up with smaller networks of relationships, making their sibling connections proportionally more important. These connections have been shown to increase the resilience of kids in care.

- ⊗ Children crave the connectedness of their sibling relationships. If children in out-of-home care lose track of their siblings, they will very likely go searching for them when they become adults. As many, if not more, adults search for their siblings than their biological parents. Brothers and sisters often turn out to be the most important family that children who have been removed from their homes have as adults.

The vast majority of children who are removed from their homes have siblings, and yet typically less than half of those are able to remain living with those siblings. While placing kids with brothers and sisters is not always possible due to lack of resource family capacity or abuse histories between siblings, doing our best to maintain those connections will significantly improve the lives of kids in care. Without connections these relationships wither.

Connections can mean visitation, phone or social media contact, or, at the least, being able to share information about the other siblings with the child in care. By supporting these relationships, we can help ensure a better experience for children in care, as well as a future with people these kids call "family."

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Waukesha County Foster Care Ambassador Kick Off Event



The Waukesha County Foster Care Ambassador Kick Off Event was held on February 22. All of our guests were provided with the tools they need to become Foster Care Ambassadors in their community. Our goal is to have 40 new foster homes in 2017. We would like to thank all of our current foster parents who attended the event and were able to answer questions.

A big thank you to:
 Bette Winkler
 Noreen Cheesman
 Jennifer & Kevin Poston
 Tony Serksnys
 Janice Jones
 Laura & Gerry Morrison
 Judy & Check Koenig
 Angela Brost
 Sheri & Richard Rens
 Misty & Stephanie Knuteson



If additional individuals are interested in becoming an ambassador, or would like additional marketing materials to distribute throughout the community, they can go to our website: <http://www.wcfostercare.com> and click on the "How Can You Help?" tab, enter their information, and we will get them the necessary supplies.



Also, if you know of a community activity or organization that you think would be a good place for us to have a booth to recruit foster families, please let us know under the "How Can You Help" tab on our website.

Waukesha County currently has only about 12 homes that are available to take in youth, and of those 12, only 2 are willing to take in youth over the age of 8. We are looking for foster homes to take older youth, as well as sibling groups. If we could get just one family in each of the municipalities in Waukesha County, we would have fulfilled our goal.

Help us reach our goal of 40 homes in 2017!



Thank You! And Happy Birthday, Rebecca!

Rebecca Pope celebrated her 9th Birthday! Rather than accept gifts for herself, she asked all of the 3rd grade girls at Swallow Elementary to donate items for youth coming into foster care to fill duffle bags and to help support summer activities!



Rebecca - We wish you a VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY! The world needs more young, kind-hearted people like you!



Support for Those with Older Youth with Challenging Behaviors

Mrs. Noreen Cheesman has graciously offered to become an informal support to any foster care provider who has placement of an older youth struggling with challenging behaviors. Mr. and Mrs. Cheesman have been licensed by Waukesha County since January of 2016, and currently have placement of three older youth with specialized needs. Mrs. Cheesman recognizes the importance of being able to process these behaviors when foster parents begin to feel overwhelmed. Mrs. Cheesman can be reached at her home number: 262-695-9995. Thank you, Noreen!

Conversations with a Cop

Conversations with a Cop is a Leadership Waukesha Experience project to help build positive relationships between law enforcement and the youth of Waukesha County. The mission of Conversations with a Cop is to help eliminate barriers between local police and area youth. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions, voice concerns, and get to know the local police officers. Beverages and snacks will be provided.

WHEN: Thursday, March 30, 2017
TIME: 1:00 - 2:00 pm
WHERE: WCTC - Waukesha Campus
 327 E. Broadway, Waukesha, WI 53186
COST: FREE!!
REGISTER: Please contact Tim Holloway (THolloway3@wctc.edu) or call (262) 695-6511 to register by March 27, 2017

Milwaukee Art Museum

Admission to the Milwaukee Art Museum is free for individuals and families (excluding groups) on the first Friday of each month, thanks to Meijer! Go to their website for more information at <https://mam.org>

Milwaukee St. Patrick's Day Parade

The Shamrock Club of Wisconsin's 51st Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade will take place on March 11, 2017, stepping off at noon at 3rd and Wisconsin, and finishing at Water and Highland. Come and enjoy one of the best St. Patrick's Day Parades in the country and the grandest parade in Wisconsin!

Training and Events

Required Training

Required Training For All Relative Care Providers, Level 1 and Level 2 Foster Homes

Foster Parent Orientation – The Foster Parent Orientation is open to anyone interested in becoming a foster parent. **If you are currently in the process of becoming a licensed foster parent, you are required to attend this Orientation class prior to the approval of your foster care license.** Please complete the on-line Pre-Placement training prior to attending the Orientation session. The online Pre-Placement training is located at <http://wcwpds.wisc.edu/Pre-Placement.htm> Please save the certificates after you have completed each Module. These are required to become licensed.

WHEN: March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13, July 11, August 8, September 12, October 10, November 14, and December 12, 2017
TIME: 5:30 - 6:30 pm
WHERE: Waukesha County Human Services, 514 Riverview Ave., Waukesha, WI 53188

RSVP to Libby Sinclair at esinclair@waukeshacounty.gov or 262-548-7277 (There is no childcare available.)

Required Training For Level 2 Foster Homes

As a Level 2 foster home, you are required to complete 32 hours of Foundation Training within your first 2 years of being licensed. Foundation training is offered twice a year; once in the spring and once in the fall. You must sign up for each Module of Foundation training at <http://pdsonline.csod.com> If you need assistance, you can email mcwp@uwm.edu or call 414-964-7400.

After your first 2 years, then Level 2 foster homes must complete 10 hours of on-going training each year. Additional trainings are listed on the last page of this newsletter.

Spring Foundation Series:

- ◆ Module 1, Partners in Permanency
3/14/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 2, Cultural Dynamics in Placement
3/16/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 3, Maintaining Family Connectedness
3/21/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 4a, Dynamics of Abuse & Neglect Part 1
3/23/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 4b, Dynamics of Abuse & Neglect Part 2
4/4/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 5, Impact of Trauma on Child Development
4/6/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 6, Attachment
4/11/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 7, Separation & Placement
4/18/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 8, Guidance & Positive Discipline
4/20/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
 - ◆ Module 9, Effects of Fostering on Your Family
4/27/17, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
- Keep checking PDS for the location of the Spring Foundation Series classes.



Training Sponsored by Parents United Consortium

(additional information available at <http://parentsunitedwi.org>)

ADHD Interventions for Home and School
March 8, 2017
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

Preparing for Life's Storms: Building Resiliency at Home and School
April 4, 2017
6:00 - 8:30 PM
Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

Mental Health Troubled Waters: Navigating Child & Adolescent Mental Health
April 26, 2017
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Waukesha County Technical College
Pewaukee, WI

Spring Bunny Celebration for Waukesha County Foster Youth

Join us to celebrate the spring season with a movie, popcorn, and spring crafts. A special guest will make an appearance, so be sure to bring your camera along!



WHEN: April 4, 2017
TIME: 6:00 - 7:00 pm
WHERE: Waukesha County Human Services
514 Riverview Ave., Waukesha, WI 53188

Please register at: <http://waukeshabunnyevent.eventbrite.com>



May 7, 2017 Foster Parent Appreciation Event at the Milwaukee County Zoo

August 18, 2017 Kinship & Foster Family Friday Night Fun Night at Cool Waters Waterpark

More information about both events will be coming in the mail soon!



Daylight Savings Begins on Sunday, March 12, at 2:00 am! Be sure to spring your clocks ahead!

Additional Training and Events



Training Offered By Waukesha County

Parent Café

Parent Café's are an educational opportunity for parents to come together and deal with the stressors, worries and challenges of parenting in a supportive environment.

April 3, June 19, October 3, December 5, 2017
6:00 PM - 7:45 PM

Center for Excellence

N4W22000 Bluemound Road, Waukesha
To register for childcare, RSVP or for questions call, 262-521-0317.

Support Group For Dads

A group to enhance group members' experience as fathers. Topics of discussion will include coping with stress; developing a better relationship with partner/spouse/child's mother; identifying positive role models in your life; identifying how you are a positive role model for your child(ren); discussing your role as a father and what you would like to change or improve.

Fourth Tuesday of each month

March 28, 2017

April 25, 2017

6:00PM - 7:30PM

Parents Place

1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI
262-549-5575

Foster Parent Support Group

First Thursday of each month

March 2, 2017

April 6, 2017

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Parents Place

1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI
262-549-5575

On-sight daycare is available, but you must register in advance to secure a slot as there may be a cut-off depending on the number of children.

The Clothing Closet is Busting at the Seams!



The Clothing Closet is running out of room with donations of infant and toddler clothing. All of the clothing is in good condition with no stains or imperfections. We have some really nice things in there, and many items still have store tags on them!! We also have several winter coats in a variety of sizes!! We are hoping that Kinship and Foster Families will use this resource. Please contact Linda Finn, one of our Human Services Support Specialists, at 262-548-7254, to arrange a personal appointment to come in and "shop" in the clothing closet!

Future Foster Parent Training Dates and Topics

Center for Excellence

N4W22000 Bluemound Road, Waukesha
A light dinner and daycare will be provided.

Learn More About Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

Presented by Tracy Clark & Chelsey Nisbet, On-going CPS Case Managers & Trained PCIT Therapists
March 16, 2017

Out of Control Behaviors in Children & Teens

Presented by: Lisa Miller, Therapist, HHS
April 20, 2017

RSVP at any time for all future monthly trainings at: <http://waukeshafostercaretraining.eventbrite.com>

Training

Parents Place Programs

262-549-5575 www.ppacinc.org

- **Kids Managing Anger (Parent and Child Class)**
Mondays, March 6 - 20; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Having Fun With Kids in the Kitchen (Parent and Child Class)**
Tuesday, March 7; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Prevention in the Adolescent Years (Parent and Child Class, Specific to adolescent boys)**
Tuesdays, March 7 - 28; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Music**
Wednesday, March 22; 5:30 - 6:30 PM
- **Big Emotions-Meltdowns and Tantrums**
Wednesday, March 29; 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- **Co-Parenting**
Wednesdays, April 5 - 26; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Parenting Children That Have Experienced Trauma**
Thursday, April 6; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Read**
Wednesday, April 12; 5:30 - 6:30 PM

Coalition for Children

www.coalitionforcyf.org

For other training opportunities, see the Coalition for Children, Youth & Families website: www.coalitionforcyf.org. They offer interactive webinars that count toward the required face to face training hours.



Contact Numbers:

Waukesha County
Health & Human Services
262-548-7212

Vickie Smith, Foster Care
Licensing Supervisor
262-970-4761

Susan Peck, Foster Care Level 2
Coordinator
262-896-8574

Libby Sinclair, Relative Foster
Care Level 1 Coordinator
262-548-7277

Megan Quandt, Kinship & Foster
Care Coordinator
262-548-7373

Jessica Morris, Kinship & Foster
Care Coordinator
262-548-7256

Eve Altizer, Ongoing Social Work
Supervisor
262-548-7272

Eric Calvino, Ongoing Social Work
Supervisor
262-548-7271

Social Workers:

Tracy Clark 262-548-7270
Megan Fishler..... 262-896-8570
Abbey Girman..... 262-548-7695
Sharon Godwin 262-548-7684
Laura Jahnke 262-548-7359
Jamie Kasten 262-548-7265
Jessica Larsen 262-548-7346
Maria Maurer 262-548-7345
Chelsey Nisbet 262-896-6896
Rachel O'Sullivan 262-548-7639
Stacy Pawlak 262-548-7262
Elizabeth Russo 262-548-7349
Kim Sampson 262-548-7273
Linda Senger 262-548-7698
Sara Waldron 262-548-7371

Children's Mental Health Outreach
262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911
Family Emergency: 211 or
262-547-3388

If an Allegation of Abuse or
Neglect has been made
against you, please call:

FASPP
Norma Schoenberg
920-922-9627